

## SUMMARY

The new Workforce Development System will enhance Missouri's ability to compete effectively in the global economy. Integrating economic development and workforce development is the key to a system that responds to labor market changes in a timely and effective manner. A workforce development system that brings job seekers and employers together more rapidly will increase productivity, invigorate the economy, and improve Missouri's quality of life.

***New Directions in Workforce Development*** outlines the emphasis placed on community-based design and local control of One-Stop Career Centers as well as making the Division of Workforce Development highly responsive to the needs of job seekers and employers. As the new Division enhances services for Missourians it will look for guidance from the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and policy leadership from the Missouri Training and Employment Council.

The Division of Workforce Development will expand citizen accessibility to employment and training services and emphasize customer choice - always putting the citizen ahead of bureaucracy. Streamlining customer intake and tracking systems will shorten the time required to serve the citizens and will reduce the length of time people are dependent on unemployment benefits or public assistance.

The workforce is dynamic. Missouri must focus on developing a consolidated workforce development system that provides Missouri employers with the best skilled and trained workers. Working for one company is the exception, rather than the rule. Workers today must take the responsibility for their own careers in order to remain employable in a changing job market. It is the role of the new Workforce Development System to identify work skills that are transferable to existing, new, and expanding jobs.

The new Division will assist employers by improving access to the skilled workers and filling their job openings in a timely manner. Providing timely labor market information will also help them stay competitive in the marketplace.